

you, Nay : but, except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." Jesus here disabuses the minds of his hearers of the pernicious error that associates a special sin with every catastrophe that befalls a people.

Perhaps this is the message to the world in the destruction of St. Pierre. Think not for a moment that the people of St. Pierre were sinners above all they who live in New York, or Chicago. But except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. St. Peter predicts a universal tornado of fire, when "the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth and all its works shall be burned up." The recent eruption of Mt. Pelee shows how this universal catastrophe might be brought about. Scientists have discovered that a new and hitherto unknown force operated in that dreadful eruption. A vast quantity of gas and superheated steam, all of which was charged with a tremendous voltage of electricity, suddenly burst from the mountain. It was this irresistible tornado, and not an overflow of melted lava, which destroyed the city and country. Imagine if you can a tornado of blazing gas and steam, so charged with electricity that a thousand thunderbolts shot from its fiery edge, imagine this incandescent hurricane flying thru the air with cyclonic speed and power. Suppose that it should occur over a wide range of country, over a whole state, over a continent, or simultaneously over the whole world. What would happen? Evidently something answering very nearly to Peter's prophecy. In a moment the whole planet would be a valley of death. The cities of the nation would fall before that dreadful blast as St. Pierre fell, and their inhabitants would perish in a breath.

When the wires announced the terrible calamity on the island of Martinique the whole world was shocked. Forty thousand people instantaneously swept into eternity by a flood of fire is a catastrophe that staggers our faith. And yet why should it be so? It is an incomprehensible mystery, but is the mystery any greater and the tragedy any sadder viewed from the point of the sudden death of the forty thousand than the death of the humble peasant by the fall of a piece of timber? Is it not rather the multiplication of numbers that arrests our horror and at which our faith reels? But this multiplication of numbers does not increase the mystery beyond the tragedy in the case of the death of the single life. And viewed from the standpoint of Revelation is the sudden death either of one or a thousand more awful and a greater injustice than its gradual coming to each one of us on beds of long continued affliction and suffering? Death is a fact in the life of each individual, and it should not be regarded as less awful when it comes to us gradually and individually than when it comes suddenly to a whole community. For sudden death it should be the purport of each one to prepare, just as tho that, rather than gradual decay, were to be taken as the normal expectation of man. From death we have no promise of protection, but we do have the promise of God's protection *thru* death. The everlasting arms of him who slumbers not nor sleeps are round about us, and he whose tenderest pity follows the fall of the sparrow to the ground has promised to be with us even tho we pass thru the valley of the shadow of death.

In commenting on the calamity on the island of Martinique the living church says :

Every one of those poor souls who were suddenly swept into judgment had lived the exact time allotted to him by the divine decree, as truly as tho each had died separately from disease.

This it seems to us is an irrational view of the matter. That the lives of forty thousand men and women, boys and girls, children and infants, should by fixed decrees of the Almighty end on May 8, 1902, is a mystery far more inexplicable than that Mt. Pelee should pour forth from the bowels of the earth a volume of steam, boiling mud, fire and brimstone, all charged with a tremendous voltage of electricity, carrying death and destruction in its path.

Well may such a day be called "that dreadful day of the Lord." To the people of stricken Martinique and St. Pierre, the 8th of May was "that dreadful day of the Lord." The few who escaped the flaming sword of the death angel on that day speak of that vision as a vision of hell. How are we reminded of our littleness and nothingness in the presence of such mighty forces, in the face of this indescribable fury of destruction. We are but as the grasshoppers of the earth; we are but as the dust of the balance. Humility and penitence are the lessons for us to learn when thus we stand for a moment in the awful presence of the Lord God Almighty.

### Peace Again

The South African War has come to an end. God be praised. It ought never to have begun. Thousands of the slain who can never be restored to life, millions of treasure, a destroyed country, all this and a thousand times more of suffering and bitterness and tears, add up the cost of this long and astonishing waste between the mightiest empire on the one hand, and two small farmer republics on the other. But in spite of all this, the war will not be without valuable compensations. Enlightened government, free institutions, a stronger development, a wider prosperity, a more splendid civilization, will follow in the wake of British victory. The Boer civilization was insular. English civilization is cosmopolitan.

Another gain growing out of this war is the dramatic illustration it affords of the meaning of war with modern weapons. Still another gain arises from its proof of the enormous cost of modern war. We venture to predict that hereafter much more reliance than ever before will be placed upon diplomacy to prevent war. The richest nation can no longer afford them. Victory can only be gained at a cost of blood and treasure that makes it only less calamitous than defeat. A long stride has been made toward universal peace. Appeals to arbitration will become more frequent and more conclusive. Let us hail the dawning of a brighter day for the nations of the earth. The time hastens when they shall "learn war no more."

### A Serious Problem

Preachers for vacant pulpits, and pulpits for unemployed preachers. That is the problem. All the denominations except the Methodists are confronted with this anomalous condition, and know not what to do with it. The Methodists have brought to bear upon the problem a little common sense and a little good management, and they have solved it so far